

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 have been examined. Claims 1-9 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Also, the Examiner has indicated that claims 10 and 11 are allowed.

I. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-9 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly omitting essential elements. Accordingly, Applicant has amended claims 1, 9 and 12 in a manner believed to overcome the rejection (i.e., a controller is now recited).

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of EP 1096421 to Nakajima et al. ("Nakajima") in view of U.S. Publication No. 2003/0234847 to Takekoshi et al. ("Takekoshi")

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 5, 6 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Nakajima in view of Takekoshi.

A. Claims 1 and 12

In view of the present amendments to claims 1 and 12, Applicant submits that claims 1 and 12 are patentable for at least analogous reasons as claims 10 and 11.

B. Claims 2, 3, 5 and 6

Since claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 are dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Nakajima, Takekoshi and U.S. Patent No. 6,270,199 to Kimura et al. ("Kimura")

The Examiner has rejected claims 4 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Nakajima, Takekoshi and Kimura.

A. Claim 4

Since claim 4 is dependent upon claim 1, and Kimura fails to cure the deficient teachings of Nakajima and Takekoshi, in regard to claim 1, Applicant submits that claim 4 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

B. Claim 9

Since claim 9 contains features that are analogous to the features discussed above for claim 1, Applicant submits that claim 9 is patentable for at least analogous reasons as claim 1 (and allowed claims 10 and 11):

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Nakajima, Takekoshi and U.S. Patent No. 6,416,151 to Otsuka et al. ("Otsuka")

The Examiner has rejected claims 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Nakajima, Takekoshi and Otsuka. However, since claims 7 and 8 are dependent upon claim 1, and Otsuka fails to cure the deficient teachings of Nakajima and Takekoshi, in regard to claim 1, Applicant submits that claims 7 and 8 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

V. Allowable Subject Matter

As set forth above, the Examiner has indicated that claims 10 and 11 are allowed.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

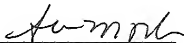
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